



Urban District Council of
Sowerby.

ANNUAL

REPORTS

— OF —

Medical Officer of Health

— AND —

Inspector of Nuisances

FOR

1920.

SOWERBY BRIDGE :
J. W. EDWARDS, PRINTER, &C., TOWN HALL STREET,

1921.



Urban District Council

— OF —

SOWERBY.

PUBLIC HEALTH COMMITTEE.

December 31st, 1920.

Councillor R. BRADLEY (Chairman).

„ S. HANSON, J.P.
„ J. WADSWORTH.
„ T. HEAP.
„ C. CLEMENTS.
„ F. WOLFENDEN.
„ A. MEADOWCROFT.
„ F. BATESON.
„ H. E. HOLROYD.
„ N. HANSON.
„ G. H. HOYLE.
„ S. HANSON.

PUBLIC HEALTH DEPARTMENT.

Medical Officer of Health :
JOHN A. ADAMS, B.A., M.B., B.Ch.

Sanitary Inspector :
J. SMITH, A.R.S.I.

URBAN DISTRICT OF SOWERBY, 1920.

STATISTICAL SUMMARY.

Area of District in acres (exclusive of water) ...	2462
Rateable Value	£10247
Altitude, varies from 270ft. to 1250ft. above sea level.	
Latitude, 53 deg. 42 N.	Longitude, 1 deg. 56 W.
Population (Census of 1911)	3232
Birth Rate (1919)	13.4
„ (1920)	16.9
Death rate (1919)	16.2
„ (1920)	17.8
Deaths of Infants under 1 year of age (1919) ...	5
„ „ (1920) ...	3
Rainfall taken at the Haugh End by J. Selwyn	
Rawson, Esq., J.P.	48.54 inches.
Rainfall—July, 1920	7.59 inches.
Against an average for 50 years of ...	3.10 inches.

SOWERBY URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL.

Report of the Medical Officer of Health,

For the Year ending December, 1920.

To the Chairman and Members of the Council:

GENTLEMEN,

I beg to submit for your consideration my Report for the year 1920.

Geological Formation.—The District is situate on the dip-slope of a mill-stonegrit formation, the rocks consisting of alternating beds of sandstones and shales, which dip, roughly, from N.W. to S.E. The lie of the strata is of great importance as regards contamination of wells from impurities higher up. The contour of the District is mountainous, and the surface, with the exception of some little agriculture, done chiefly for the purpose of improving the sward, is laid out in grass.

A considerable quantity of milk is produced; which is principally sold as new milk, the surplus being made into butter.

During the War some cereal crops, principally oats, have been grown with not very satisfactory results, as the altitude of the land and the absence of clear sunlight, owing to the smoky atmosphere, prevented ripening of the grain.

Occupation.—The inhabitants are chiefly employed in the foundries and factories in the valleys, many of them combining factory work with agricultural pursuits. As a result, the physique of the people will compare most favourably with that of the town dwellers in neighbouring districts.

In past times there has been a considerable amount of consanguineous marriage, which has not exerted a beneficial influence.

The population during the year under review is taken at 3130.

The District is gradually becoming peopled by comparatively aged folks, which will help to explain the low birth rate and the advanced age of a large proportion of the deaths.

Births.—Males 35, females 18; total 53. Birth rate 16.9 per thousand against 13.4 in 1919. Birth rate for England and Wales during 1920 was 25.4.

One illegitimate birth registered in 1920, and two in 1919.

Infantile Mortality.—Three deaths occurred during the year in children under one year, giving a mortality 60.0 per thousand births.

These deaths were due to congenial conditions—all three being premature births.

The Infantile Mortality for England and Wales during 1920 was 80.

Deaths.—Males 27, females 29; total 56. Death rate 17.8 per thousand against 16.2 in 1919. Death rate for England and Wales during 1920 was 12.4.

Ages at Death.

3 deaths occurred under 1 year.				
4	„	„	between 1 and 5 years.	
4	„	„	„	5 „ 15 „
4	„	„	„	15 „ 25 „
8	„	„	„	25 „ 65 „
19	„	„	„	65 „ 75 „
14	„	„	over 75 years.	

Two Inquests were held during the year.

Not certified—three deaths.

Violence—one death other than suicide.

Suicide, one death.

Seven deaths occurred in Institution outside District.

Zymotic Diseases.—During 1920 seven cases have been reported as against eleven cases in 1919.

Two deaths occurred during the year from Zymotic Disease. One from Measles and one from Diphtheria.

Diphtheria.—Four cases.

Scarlatina.—One case.

Erysipelas.—Two cases.

Epidemic Diarrhoea.—A few cases of ordinary type were present during the late summer.

Tuberculosis.—Four Deaths occurred during the year and no case was notified.

Cases of Tuberculosis attend the Tuberculosis Dispensary in Sowerby Bridge.

Respiratory Diseases.

Thirteen deaths occurred from Bronchitis and Pneumonia.

Two deaths from Cancer occurred during 1920.

Hospital Accommodation.—No Isolation Hospital in the District, but arrangements have been made with the Halifax Corporation for the reception of cases in the Halifax Borough Isolation Hospital.

Venereal Diseases.—The District is served by the Venereal Clinic at the Royal Halifax Infirmary, where cases receive attention free of charge.

Schools.—Three schools in the District. During the year attention was drawn to the insanitary condition of the closet accommodation at St. Peter's School, Sowerby, and, at an interview with the Managers, a scheme to remedy the nuisance was suggested.

Housing.—900 houses exist in the District, of which number 800 are of the working-class type.

In the census of 1911 there were 125 uninhabited houses in the District, now there are practically no uninhabited houses.

Dwellings are built of stone and are, as a rule, scrupulously clean, but many of them do not come up to the standard of requirements under the Housing Scheme of the Ministry of Health. Owing to a general scarcity of houses these cannot be condemned as unfit.

There are several examples of over-crowding, even though the average occupancy is only 3.5 persons per house.

There is an estimated need of 60 houses, and a scheme is under consideration for the erection of a number of houses.

No new house of artisan type has been erected during the year.

Water Supply.—Sowerby Town is supplied from a reservoir at Sowerby Green, and the outlying parts are dependent on springs, which are numerous and yield well.

During the summer of 1920 there was no curtailment of the supply from the reservoir at Sowerby Green.

GENERAL REPORT.

Sewage.—Conveyed by a sewage system to disposal works at Sowerby Bridge and Luddenden Foot where it is dealt with.

Cowsheds.—Conditions, fairly good. The cowsheds are generally kept clean and well lime-washed, but in some cases more attention will have to be paid to the general ventilation and lighting.

Milk is of good quality and is mostly sold outside the District.

No complaint has been made from any District in which the Milk is sold.

In view of the need for more up-to-date treatment of milk in the local dairies, a course of Lecturers on milk supply was promoted ; the Lecturer was provided by the County Council.

Factories.—Three factories, one dyehouse, and one chemical works giving employment in the area. Condition of chemical works unsatisfactory.

Bakehouses.—Four (with one exception) clean and well lighted. No underground bakeries.

Conclusion.—With the exception of the epidemic of Influenza, mentioned previously, there has been no special incidence of disease, and, as was to be expected, the deaths were chiefly of people of advanced years.

Like most other similar Districts in manufacturing areas, we feel the need for more housing accommodation and, in view of this, the question of an amply supply of water for domestic purposes has become acute.

During the year the question of water supply has engaged attention and two schemes have been considered :—Obtaining water from neighbouring areas, one of which has a water main passing through this District, or constructing a storage reservoir in our own area. So far neither scheme has materialized, and our Housing Scheme is being hung up by the want of a proper supply of water for domestic purposes. At the same time any further conversion of privies into water closets is blocked, and this applies especially to one of our Day Schools.

I am, Gentlemen,

Yours obediently,

JOHN A. ADAMS, *M.O.H.*

For detailed statement of work carried out by Sanitary Department see Sanitary Inspector's Report.

Sanitary Inspector's Report for 1920.

TOWN HOUSE,
SOWERBY.

To the Chairman and Members of the Sanitary Committee.

GENTLEMEN,

I have pleasure in submitting to you my report of the Sanitary condition of the District for your consideration.

Your district has been continually inspected for the detection and suppression of Nuisances during the year. The number dealt with was 84; numbered abated 73, number unabated on the 31st December, 11.

The Scavenging of the district was carried out by Owners during 1920, and I desire to congratulate you on deciding to take over this work during expiring year, in order to assist the duty to be carried out efficiently, many of the conveniences will require to be constructed on modern lines, and in accordance with the plan submitted to all Owners, Tub Closets are not being requested, but a more sanitary system of the Privy Ash-place Type, I feel sure the more systematic cleansing will be a decided improvement on the past method.

Daisy Lee Farm has been acquired for the purpose of Tipping House Refuse and Night Soil, and portions of the land has been fenced off, and I trust there will be no reason to complain of any nuisance arising therefrom.

Total No. of W.C.'s	...	...	127
Tub Closet	...	...	122
Privies and Middens	...	...	397

Sewers and Drains.—No new lengths of Sewers have been constructed during the year, but I am pleased to state that new House Drains are again being pressed forward. Three colonies of Dwelling Houses have had entire re-construction schemes amounting to about 150 yards new drains.

The Drains and Sanitary Conveniences at St. Peter's National School, Sowerby, are not conducive to the good health of the children attending this School, and my recommendations, as stated in a report to the School Managers dated the 27th July, 1919, are very desirous and necessary, both in the opinion of your M.O.H. and myself.

10 Sink Wastes have been trapped and disconnected.

Housing.

12 Inspections of Dwelling Houses have been made. The following is a summary of defects:—

Defective Drains	...	...	...	3
Water in Cellars	...	...	...	3
Defective Rain Water Pipes and				
Eaves Gutters	...	...	...	4
				—
				10

Cleanliness in the Houses is a marked feature.

Over-Crowding.—Upon investigation 7 Houses were found to be distinctly over-crowded at Triangle. It was impossible to take action owing to present shortage of Houses.

Disinfection has been carried out as follows:—

No. of Rooms disinfected for Infectious Diseases	...	9
„ „ „ other Diseases	...	3
„ „ „ Vermin	...	2

Schools (3) Disinfected every 4 months.

Disinfectants are supplied free to Householders.

Slaughter Houses.—1 Slaughter House only is in use, weekly visits are made, it is kept clean, has a fairly good water supply and good drainage; there are four meat salesmen in the district, and three of them use the Public Abitors at Sowerby Bridge.

Bakehouses.—There are 4 Bakehouses upon the register, none are underground, frequent inspections are made by myself and your M.O.H., 3 are in a very clean and satisfactory condition, but the one at Lower Bentley Royd is not kept in a satisfactory state, the Baker is careless in allowing dirt to collect, though after warnings he is now improving, the building is a very old one and does not lend itself to food production, and I have warned him to try and find a more suitable place for a Bakehouse.

Offensive Trades.—The only one in your District is Mill Bank Chemical Works, raw bones are now being used in place of calcinated bones as previously in use. Complaints are again to hand respecting the fumes from the furnace, and strict care is not exercised in dealing with the bones, those should be treated as quickly as possibly, or they soon become a breeding ground for flies and vermin, and a danger to health of the inhabitants.

There are 3 Fried Fish Shops in your area, all are inspected at short intervals; they are always found to be in a clean condition.

Cowsheds and Dairies.—There are 93 Cowsheds in your area and 65 Cowkeepers. The No. of Cows is about 550. During the past 4 years very few reforms have been made in the Cowsheds. Your M.O.H. and myself have Inspected the Cowsheds and with two exceptions found them fairly clean.

One case of Anthrax was discovered, the carcase was immediately destroyed by burning, and the whole Farm Buildings thoroughly cleansed and Disinfected, no other case occurred. Your M.O.H. rendered every assistance in dealing with this matter.

A better standard of Cowsheds will however become imperative. Lighting and Ventilation might in several cases be improved. A milk of Class A quality cannot be produced in badly lighted and ventilated mistals, and it is essential that so important an article of food as milk, should be produced under good hygienic conditions.

Petroleum Acts.—There are 2 licensed Petrol Stores in the District, both are underground Tanks (Ventilated) with centrifugal pumps for drawing off the Petrol, several inspections were made and found to be in accordance with the Acts. 1 license also granted at Mill Bank Chemical Works for storage of Benzine in connection with their Glue Plant.

Water Supplies.—The summer of 1920 was a very wet season and no shortage of water was experienced, all the supplies are privately owned and are used to their full capacity, no development of your District can take place until a greater quantity of water is available, and I find a real difficulty in obtaining water for improving the sanitary arrangements of your area, the question is a large one, but one that needs your careful consideration.

I am pleased to state that despite the difficulties arising as a result of the war, a little progress has been made in abolishing insanitary conditions, though there is still need for many alterations and reforms.

The duties under the Public Health Department continue to grow, additional clerical duties are therefore essential.

In conclusion, I desire to thank the Chairman and Members of the Sanitary Committee and the M.O.H., for the assistance rendered to me in the discharge of my duties.

I am, Gentlemen,

Your obedient servant,

J. SMITH,

Sanitary Inspector.